



NEWS RELEASE

**NELSON P. COHEN
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
DISTRICT OF ALASKA**

Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse • 222 W. 7th Avenue • Room 253 • Anchorage, AK 99513-7567 • (907) 271-5071

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CHECK SCHEME DEFENDANTS SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced that on December 6, 2007, Tuisheka Hughes, a resident of Anchorage, was sentenced in federal court in Anchorage, to 36 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release, for her convictions of conspiracy to manufacture and cash counterfeit checks, and possession of counterfeit securities with the intent to deceive. Co-defendants in the conspiracy case, Monique Henderson, of Anchorage, was sentenced to 36 months on October 30, 2007, and Rashad Dominic Arnsworth, was sentenced to 88 months on November 6, 2007. In April 2003, Arnsworth was convicted of similar offenses in federal court, and was on supervised release for those offenses at the time of the current charges.

Chief United States District Court Judge John Sedwick imposed sentences on Hughes, age 27, Henderson, age 34, and Arnsworth, age 29.

According to information presented to the court by Assistant United States Attorney Crandon Randell, the three defendants, led by Arnsworth, manufactured counterfeit checks using the names and account numbers of local businesses obtained from legitimate checks. The defendants then, using a computer program designed to create and print checks, would print checks made out to a number of persons from the community recruited for the purpose of cashing the checks. These persons, approximately 130 in number, would cash the checks at local businesses, including Wal-Mart, Fred Meyer, and various check-cashing establishments. The persons cashing the checks, referred to as “runners,” would get a fee for their service. The total amount involved in the scheme approached \$200,000, and the court ordered each defendant to pay restitution in the amount of \$153,002.

Mr. Cohen commended the Fraud unit of the Anchorage Police Department, the Alaska State Troopers, and the FBI, for the investigation leading to the successful prosecution of Arnsworth, Henderson, and Hughes.

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